Woman's Work for Woman

Its Place and Power

As are the Mothers
so
are the People.

BY

Mrs. Moses Smith

The Covenant.

GRATEFUL that "I know that my Redeemer liveth—,"

Mindful that vast millions of women and girls can never hear the "tidings of great joy," unless a Christian woman be sent to them,—

Remembering that Jesus made loving obedience the supreme test of discipleship, and that His last most solemn command was "Go teach all nations—,"

I gladly enter into this covenant of obedience, that I will not cease to make offerings of Prayer, Time and Money, to the end that the daughters of sorrow in heathen lands may know the love of Jesus.

Woman's Board of Missions of the Interior,
Room 603, 59 Dearborn St., Chicago.

Price 2 cents each, 20 cents doz.

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WHEN Miss Adele M. Fielde, of the Baptist Board, and author of that interesting book, *Pagoda Shadows,* began her work at Bangkok, there were grave doubts in the minds of the other missionaries as to her methods. Complaints were made to the Board that she was "preaching the Gospel." So serious did the matter become, that the Board felt they must inquire into the difficulty. Accordingly she was called before the company of grave and reverend gentlemen.

"Miss Fielde, we understand that you have taken upon you to preach the gospel."

She replied very modestly, "I will tell you what I do. I take a tent and a native woman and go off ten or fifteen

miles in the country, camping at night, and in the daytime I go under a tree and gather a group of native women and read the New Testament and explain it to them. If that is preaching, I suppose I preach."

"Well," said one of the gentlemen, rather troubled, for this was a serious charge of the missionaries, "have you ever been ordained to preach?"

With the utmost gravity and dignity she replied, "No, I have never been ordained to preach, but I was fore-ordained." It is needless to say Miss Fielde was returned to the foreign work.

In the retrospect of even a few (30) years, the organization of Woman's Boards of missions is seen to be such a providential adaptation of the power of Christian women to the needs of unevangelized peoples, that we may confidently say, it is a force fore-planned of God.

On the one hand, given, a God of

love, "who wills that all men be saved;" given, a divine plan of salvation "from the foundation of the world;" given, the risen Christ, walking among men and with the urgency of yearning love commanding His chosen, "Go preach the Gospel unto all people."

On the other hand, given, nations without the knowledge of Christ in the "desolations of unrighteousness;" given, women in the degradation of uncivilized peoples; given, women in the seclusion and impure imprisonment of the zenana and harem, where only a Christian woman can preach the gospel; and the organization of Woman's Boards, through which women should be sent with the Gospel message to women, to the mothers of nations, becomes an evident part of God's great plan of redemption.

In the "fullness of time" God's call to the work was heard. In the words of another:

"What was it that shook the church,

roused the women to united, systematic, concentrated action ; that moved on and on, a compelling force, until we now have in this country a spectacle of hundreds of thousands of women, representing every branch of the Christian Church, banded together in chartered societies and disbursing from one to one and a half millions of dollars every year? Whence came that powerful voice that evoked so much energy and action?

"It was not patriotism warning of the menace of an incoming tide of emigrants—that came later. It was not national remorse demanding reparation for the exiled Indian. It was not even the last command of Jesus, 'Disciple all nations,' like a clarion call to the conscience.

"It was *a human cry* appealing expressly to woman's tenderness, and it pierced her heart. It sounded out from black heathenism, ages old, lost, vast, awful—the heart-break of motherhood,

the stifled cry of distorted childhood—*this* was what happy women heard in their happy, protected homes.

"'Are there any *female men* among you to come and teach *us?*' asked a group of Chinese women twenty-nine years ago, of the American missionary. 'You must send us single women,' wrote the wife of a Baptist missionary in Burmah, as she painted the picture of zenana life. David Abeel came home on purpose to make the English-speaking women understand in what bondage and despair their Oriental sisters were. Women and only women could meet the need. Something less strenuous might have caught the ear, but it required a call just so terrible, importunate, so shut up to woman, to fasten irresistibly upon her heart."

One half the women of the world are in seclusion. This may not always mean the actual imprisonment in Indian zenanas, lattice-closed houses of China and harems of Turkey, but it does mean

that practically all the veiled, ghostly throng of the Orient, are debarred from listening to the Gospel, unless a Christian woman seeks and wins them. Unwelcome at birth, married in childhood to men whom they have never seen, without love, without light, without hope, without home, they live their lives and go the way of all the earth, leaving to their sons, as well as their daughters, their heritage of degradation.

Among uncivilized peoples, woman is a slave, nude, filthy, her life but a degree above the brute. Only a woman can teach her purity, delicacy, and the divine art of home-making. It is scarcely a figure of speech to say, that woman is the corner stone of heathenism. The fear of a mother's curse keeps many a Chinaman from investigating the claims of Christianity. An intelligent Hindu exclaimed, "It is the women who maintain the system of Hinduism."

The Work of Woman's Boards Abroad.

TO bear the light of the Word, to hide the leaven of Christ's love in the hearts of mothers and little children, than which a greater power was never wielded by human hands—this is the work.

The Methods of work are various. In education we begin with the kindergarten. Then follow the day school, boarding school and college. In these latter the girls are removed from the degrading environment of their families, placed under loving and firm control, made sharers in Christian home life, inspired to close and conscientious application in study, the Bible being a daily text book, and the conversion of the pupil the primary object.

Medical Work, with its sweet ministries of relief and healing to women who in the sorest needs of their lives

have suffered unattended, cannot be overestimated. It opens barred doors and sealed hearts, to the Gospel message. Like the Master, it is admitted to the palaces of royalty and to the hovels of the poor.

Woman's Evangelistic Work covers a wide range of service. In some places women are doing the entire work of ordained missionaries, except administering the sacraments. In zenana and house-to-house teaching, the missionary is brought into intimate, sometimes confidential relations with the women.

In Evangelistic Training Schools, native Christian women are prepared for evangelistic work among their own people. In literary work — writing, editing, translating—and in all miscellaneous missionary labor, woman is doing her full proportion.

What Woman's Boards have done for the Churches at Home.

THE law of Physics, that "Action and reaction are equal," finds its counterpart in spiritual life. Our Lord never asks His people to minister to the welfare of others without having provided an equal blessing for themselves.

Before the organization of Woman's Boards, the many-sided power of Christian women was largely dormant in the spiritual work of the church. Their arousement to a sense of personal responsibility for the evangelization of the mothers of more than half the race—and the renewed consecrations which came with the consciousness that the aim to be reached was of the highest spiritual import, even the new birth, could not fail in some measure to quicken the life of the whole church. Had all women responded to this divine call;

had all pastors rightly understood the significance of woman's foreign missionary work, the church would have received a greater impulse than it has.

It is too early in the history of the movement to trace all the results, but we may name a few. Woman's Boards have stimulated study and largely increased the intelligent knowledge of the nations, their history, their religions and their needs. Woman's Boards have increased enthusiasm, "God indwelling," without which there is no heroic, self-sacrificing work, without it no high achievement.

Woman's Boards have gathered the children, boys and girls, and are teaching them to understand and to love the Lord's last command. They have increased the number of givers, and stimulated systematic and Biblical giving. They have largely increased the volume of social and closet prayer. In the London Conference Dr. Ellinwood said, "The great Presbyterian Church is be-

ing moved to prayer by the interest of praying women." "More things are wrought by prayer, Horatio, than your philosophy e'er dreamed of."

By showing the degradation of the mothers and the miseries of little children under the Ethnic Religions, Woman's Boards have illustrated and emphasized that most practical Christian Evidence, the widening contrasts between Christian and unchristian peoples.

Many women have testified that an interest in this, "Woman's work for Woman" marked an epoch in their intellectual and spiritual life. Said one cultivated woman who had been induced to take the presidency of an auxiliary and so study the work, "I thank you. This foreign missionary work is a liberal education;" and numbers testify to a new estimate of life and its responsibilities, a new consecration and new understanding of Christ and His atonement.

The Need of Organization.

THERE have always been women interested in missions. There have been praying and giving, and local societies. But such efforts were as a woman at a hand loom, compared with the multitude of shuttles thrown by a single machine. They lacked the stimulus and momentum of organization.

But why were not the general missionary Boards sufficient? Since as has already been shown, a work of such magnitude, a work of such primary importance as hiding the leaven of the Gospel in the hearts of so many millions of mothers and children, can be done *only by women,* then for the best efficiency and the wisest economy of time, force and money, women *must* organize. Moreover as this is a "Woman's work for Woman," many things can be more fittingly adjusted by women.

Another Reason not Always Remembered.

THE tendency of a woman's life has long been toward a narrow circle. She needed to have her ideals of life, and God's purposes for her and through her, broadened. She needed to be brought into personal touch with, and made a part of, the great forces God is using for the overturning and uplifting of the nations. She needed to realize that there are responsibilities, her very own, which she may not delegate to father or to husband. She needed the inspiration that is begotten only by the consciousness, that to her is given the power to change the face of nations; and she sadly needed that development which comes from accepted responsibility and action. In no small measure has the organization of Woman's Boards accomplished this.

It should be remembered that the Woman's Boards preceded and prepared the way for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union.

The Place of Woman's Boards Among Evangelistic Forces.

THE place which Woman's Boards hold among evangelistic forces is not yet appreciated by many Christian people. Not a few regard it as something well enough to be done, but not of great importance. In their minds any Christian or philanthropic work may take the precedence.

For this reason it is well that we should consider the work and its place among the forces God is using for the world's redemption.

The Mothers, the Central Power.

IN the divine plan for the race the mother and the home are "the power-house" from which go forth "the currents" that mold and make and move society. As are the mothers so are the people, or in other words, no nation rises higher than the mothers.

What if "The boy is father of the man," the woman is mother of the boy, and as such she determines the whole status of society, not in one generation only but in many. Woman's place in society throughout the world is the paramount subject. The destiny of the race is wrapped up in it. Any attempt to solve the world's great problem, sin and salvation, without using woman as a prime factor, is sure to fail.

The experience of nineteen centuries, focussed on the needs of humanity to-day, proves without question that the one only power that can lift the human soul from the ruin sin has wrought, is *the life* that is in Christ Jesus. The problem is, to reach the great central power of society, the mothers and the homes, with the bread of life. In all the Orient, and largely in all uncivilized lands, *only a woman* can minister to this need. Therefore it follows that the agency through which, under God, this can be accom-

plished, is the most far-reaching and certain force for the redemption of the world.

The Sum of the Whole.

Here is a work of great magnitude. A work without which the world cannot be speedily evangelized. A work evidently given of God to this generation of Christian women. A work so uniquely a Woman's work for Woman that no other can assume to be like it.

Is this then a work to be given a *secondary* place in the plans of Christ's church? Is it not rather a work that lies very near the heart of Christ? Is it not a work for every faithful pastor to cherish and honor in his church?

When the mothers and the homes of the Orient and of all heathendom have been reached with the Gospel, and not till then, "shall a nation be born in a day."

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MISS M. D. WINGATE,
Secretary.

THREE-FIFTHS of the entire population of the world have not yet heard of the God who created them, and more than two-thirds of mankind know not the Christ who died to save them.

Only one-tenth of the world is numbered under Protestant Christianity. In reality nine-tenths of the human family must be taught the way of life through *Foreign Missionary effort.*

Two hundred and fifty millions of women are dependent for their only possible knowledge of Christ upon the Protestant women of America.

Ninety-eight per cent. of the church's contributions for religious purposes is spent at home, while only *two per cent.* is applied to the Foreign Field. Or, ninety-eight per cent. is spent on one-tenth of mankind, and only two per cent. on the entire remaining nine-tenths.

In the United States there is a Christian minister to every 600 persons. In heathen lands only one to 500,000.

In China there is one missionary to a million of souls.

Eighty millions of women are confined in Moslem harems.

Three hundred millions of Buddhist women have no hope of immortality, unless in some future transmigration they may be born as men.

The work of the Woman's Boards is nothing less than the endeavor to place the leaven of Christ's Gospel in the hearts of the mothers, and in the homes of all heathendom. As are the mothers, so is the nation.